

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – SANTA ANA REGIONAL WATER BOARD
MAY 10, 2022**

ITEM 2

SUBJECT

CONSIDERATION OF A PROPOSED RESOLUTION AMENDING THE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN FOR THE SANTA ANA RIVER BASIN (BASIN PLAN) TO REVISE AND UPDATE THE TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS AND NITROGEN MANAGEMENT PROGRAM (TDS/N MANAGEMENT PROGRAM).

DISCUSSION

On December 10, 2021, the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board (Santa Ana Water Board) adopted [Resolution R8-2021-0025](#) amending the Basin Plan to revise and update TDS/N management program. The amendment would update the TDS and total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) wasteload allocations (WLAs) for the wastewater treatment plants that discharge to the Santa Ana River and its tributaries, and to revise the regional groundwater and surface water monitoring programs associated with the TDS and Nitrogen Management Plan for the Santa Ana Region (Basin Plan amendment).

Federal law requires states to establish water quality standards (beneficial uses, water quality criteria, and an antidegradation policy) for all surface water bodies within the state's jurisdiction and to review those standards at least once every three years. The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Wat. Code § 13000, et seq.) establishes similar requirements in state law for both surface waters and groundwaters. For the Santa Ana Region, these standards are established in the Basin Plan. In California, water quality criteria are known as "water quality objectives."

The purpose of the Basin Plan amendment described in this Staff Report is to update the TDS and TIN WLAs for the wastewater treatment plants that discharge to the Santa Ana River and its tributaries, and to revise the regional groundwater and surface water monitoring programs. The proposed Basin Plan amendment will revise Chapter 5 of the Basin Plan as follows:

- Update the description of the WLA model that provides the basis for the establishment of TDS and TIN WLAs in the Santa Ana River Watershed.
- Update Table 5-5 of the Basin Plan to establish updated WLAs applicable to wastewater treatment facilities in the Santa Ana River Watershed.
- Provide direction to permit writers regarding how to assess compliance with TDS/TIN effluent limitations included in waste discharge requirements.

- Clarify the use of the mineral increments described in the Basin Plan (Chapter 5, “Total Dissolved Solids and Nitrogen Management,” Section III.B.2) when establishing waste discharge requirements.
- Clarify that the antidegradation review conducted during the permit process for salinity-related constituents should focus on TDS rather than individual salt ions.
- Identify future planning priorities.
- Require updates to monitoring program requirements.

POLICY ISSUE

Should the State Water Board approve the amendment to the Santa Ana Region Basin Plan to update the TDS and TIN WLAs for the wastewater treatment plants that discharge to the Santa Ana River and its tributaries, and to revise the regional groundwater and surface water monitoring programs associated with the TDS and Nitrogen Management Plan for the Santa Ana Region (Basin Plan amendment)?

FISCAL IMPACT

Santa Ana Water Board and State Water Board staff work associated with or resulting from this action will be addressed with existing and future budgeted resources.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

Approval of this resolution will amend the Santa Ana Water Board’s Basin Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the State Water Board:

1. Approve the amendment to the Basin Plan adopted under Santa Ana Water Board Resolution R8-2021-0025.
2. Authorize the Executive Director or designee to submit the Basin Plan amendment adopted under Santa Ana Water Board Resolution R8-2021-0025 as approved and the administrative record for this action to the Office of Administrative Law.